

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-09

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P R 290543Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2509

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0213

STADIS //////////////////////////////////////

EE.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, APER, XF

SUBJ: REGIONAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

REF: (A) STATE 15785 (B) MUSCAT 922, 12/31/74

1. SUMMARY: BASED ON POST EXPERIENCE TO DATE AND SCHEDULE OF TRADE PROMOTIONAL EVENTS THROUGH FY 76, EMBASSY SEES LITTLE ROLE FOR RTDO IN UAE. IF TRDO PREPARED TO TAKE ON MARKET RESEARCH EFFORT, HOWEVER, IT WOULD FILL VOID WHICH UNDER PRESENT STAFFING WE ILL EQUIPPED TO HANDLE. RATHER THAN EXPAND RTDO, EMBASSY SUPPORTS SEPTEMBER 1974 INSPECTOR'S CONCLUSION THAT SENIOR COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSTION BE CREATED TO SUPPLEMENT GULF POST' REPORTING ON LARGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. END SUMMARY.

2. RTDO ACTIVITY IN UAE HAS CONSITED OF (A) SENDING EMBASSY INFORMATION ON REGIONAL TRADE SHOWS, (B) NOTIFYING U.S. FIRMS IN BEIRUT OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN UAE (TASK WHICH WE ASSUME EMBASSY BEIRUT COMMERCIAL SECTION COULD HANDLE) AND (C) VISITING THE UAE TWICE (NEITHER VISIT WAS IN CONNECTION
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WITH U.S. TRADE EVENT NOR TO OUR KNOWLEDGE DID ANY USEFUL

REPORTING EMERGE FROM TRAVEL).

3. UPCOMING TRADE PROMOTION SCHEDULE FOR UAE IN LAST HALF OF FY 75 THROUGH FY 76 IS EXTREMELY LIGHT. MARINE CATALOG INDUSTRIES SHOW SCHEDULED FOR DUBAI IN MAY AND POSSIBLE NEW MEXICO IOGA MISSION SUGGESTED FOR ABU DHABI IN OCTOBER 1975. MOREOVER, AS EMBASSY WILL NOTE IN BEST PROSPECTS AIRGRAM, WE SEE LESSER ROLE FOR TRADITIONAL TRADE PROMOTION - AS DISTINCT FROM EFFORT CAPTURE SPECIFIC PROJECTS FOR U.S. FIRMS - IN UAE FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

4. IF RTDO IS TO BE EXPANDED, FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE ITS STAFF SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO SUPPORT OF SPECIFIC PROMOTION EVENTS BUT RATHER SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR REGIONAL MARKET RESEARCH EFFORT. CLEARLY, IF IT IS TO BE SUCCESSFUL, PARTICULARLY HERE, TRADE PROMOTION PRESUMES SOME MARKET RESEARCH. LIMITED EMBASSY STAFF, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OUR FOCUS ON PROJECT REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP, HAMPERS OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION IN THIS EXPANDING AREA.

5. IN BRIEF, AS PRESENTLY ORIENTED, WE CONCUR WITH EMBASSY MUSCAT (PAR 2, REF B) THAT ROLE FOR RTDO IN UAE HARDLY JUSTIFIES ITS EXPANSION. AND EVEN IF THAT ORIENTATION EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MARKET RESEARCH WE NOT SURE RETURN IN TERMS U.S. SALES BE WORTH EFFORT/COST.

6. IF PERSONNEL EXPANSION IN COMMERCIAL SPHERE TO BE CONSIDERED, EMBASSY SUPPORTS CONCLUSION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT DATED SEPTEMBER 1974. EMBASSY HAS RECOMMENDED THE CREATION OF A SENIOR COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSITION TO SUPPLEMENT POST'S PROJECT ORIENTED PROGRAMS, MUCH AS THE REGIONAL AIR ATTACHE NOW PROMOTES SALES OF U.S. AIRCRAFT. SUCH AN OFFICER COULD GREATLY ENHANCE OUR EFFORTS HERE BOTH BY GIVING US FURTHER EXPERTISE IN SUCH FIELDS AS FERTILIZERS, LNG/LPG, AND REFINERIES AND BY SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS TO ADVISE U.S. FIRMS ON LIKELY OPPORTUNITIES IN PARTICULAR COUNTRIES OF THE REGION. WITH SUCH OFFICER DEVELOPING CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. FIRMS, WE WILL BE IN BETTER POSITION TO RESPOND RAPIDLY TO TENDER INVITATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR NEGOTIATED BIDS. AMBASSADOR AND ECON/COMM STAFF HAVE DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME TO ENHANCE CLIMATE FOR GREATER U.S. PARTICIPATION
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IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. REGIONAL SENIOR COMMERCIAL OFFICER COULD ADD SUBSTANTIALLY TO FUTURE PROSPECTS, AND WOULD BE FAR MORE VALUABLE TO OUR EFFORTS THAN RTDO.
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